

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 14

By Ramsey

A RESOLUTION designating January 29, 2009, as “Thomas Paine Day” in the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, emerging from the laboring classes in Thetford, England, Thomas Paine rose to world renown and prominence during the 18th century as a gifted and influential political and religious philosopher, inventor, journalist, and legislator; and

WHEREAS, a peer of George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams, Thomas Paine established his role as a founder of this nation through his essay *Common Sense*, which helped American colonists solidify their desire for separation from Great Britain; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Paine supported the American Revolution through his military service in the Continental Army, his unselfish donation of personal funds to the struggling nation, and with his inspirational series of tracts entitled *The American Crisis*; and

WHEREAS, although Thomas Paine's series of writings sustained colonists throughout the war, it was his first edition of *The American Crisis* that was read aloud to motivate General Washington's troops as they prepared to recross the Delaware River and launch a surprise attack on the Hessian garrison at Trenton; and

WHEREAS, while he is best known for his contributions to the American Revolution, Thomas Paine is also recognized as a supporter of universal and equal education for boys and girls, equality for women, religious freedom, and as an outspoken advocate for the improvement of workers' rights and wages; and

WHEREAS, unlike many prominent leaders of the founding generation, Thomas Paine was a vocal critic of slavery, and persistently warned of the inherent contradiction that existed between slaveholding and the ideals of the American Revolution; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Paine's bold, clear prose not only ignited revolutionary sentiment in the American colonies, but also directly influenced the French Revolution, supported the struggles of English workers during the Industrial Revolution, and continues to inspire those who seek liberty and democracy throughout the world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this Body hereby designates January 29, 2009, as "Thomas Paine Day" in the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage all citizens of the State of Tennessee to participate in its observance by reflecting upon Thomas Paine's influence on the American Revolution and his role as a Founding Father of the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.